IN THE CLAIMS:

The status and content of each claim follows. *No amendments to the application are proposed by the present paper.*

1.   (previously presented) A computer network for providing services comprising:

a plurality of computing elements each of which comprises general-purpose, programmable computing resources that can be selectively programmed for supporting one or more of a plurality of different electronic services, wherein said services are controlled or operated by commands or data transmitted via email;

a mail server for receiving and routing email; and

a redirector, separate from said mail server, communicatively connected to said mail server and each of said computing elements, wherein said redirector receives email from said mail server, wherein each email contains a command or data for a specific said service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element, and wherein said redirector is configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming email, whether or not said email is addressed to a specific computing element, and forward at least a portion of the email to that available computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements;

wherein said electronic services are controlled by said email routed by said redirector among said plurality of computing elements.

2.   (original)   The network of claim 1, wherein:

each of said plurality of computing elements comprises a service handler; and

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said service handler on a computing element extracts an access function from an

incoming email message and complies with said extracted access function.

3.   (previously presented)The network of claim 1, wherein said redirector

comprises a mail router for routing email messages.

4.   (previously presented)The network of claim 1, wherein:

said redirector comprises a service handler for extracting an access function from

incoming email messages; and

said service handler complies with said extracted access function by transmitting

commands or data to at least one of said plurality of computing elements supporting said

services.

5.   (previously presented)The network of claim 4, wherein said commands or data

comprises a service.

6.   (previously presented)The network of claim 4, wherein said commands or data

comprises a specified location where a service can be accessed.

7.   (cancelled)

8.   (previously presented)The network of claim 1, further comprising a firewall

through which said email messages are received, said mail server and redirector both being

protected within a common firewall.

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9. (original) The network of claim 8, further comprising a web client within said firewall communicating with said redirector to obtain access to said services.

10. (original) The network of claim 9, wherein said redirector generates web pages related to said services for said web client.

11. (previously presented)A method of providing services with a computer network that comprises a plurality of computing elements each of which comprise general-purpose, programmable computing resources that can be selectively programmed for supporting one or more of a plurality of different electronic services that are controlled or operated by commands or data received via email, and a redirector, communicatively connected to each of said computing elements; said method comprising:

receiving an email message, said message containing a command or data configured for a specific service on one of said computing elements, wherein said email message relates to said specific service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element; and

routing at least some of said email message comprising said command or data to a corresponding computing element to control or execute said specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said computing elements, wherein said redirector determines which computing element receives said command or data from said email message based on the specific service to which that email message relates.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

routing an email message to a computing element with said redirector;

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extracting an access function from that email message with a service handler on that computing element; and

complying with said extracted access function.

13.   (previously presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

extracting an access function from incoming email messages with a service handler on said redirector; and

complying with said extracted access function by transmitting commands or data from said email message to one of said plurality of computing elements supporting said services.

14.   (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said step of extracting an access function further comprises extracting a service from said email, and said step of complying with said extracted access function further comprises loading the extracted service to one of said computing elements with available computing resources.

15.   (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein said commands or data comprise a specified location from which a service is to be obtained, said method further comprising obtaining said service from said specified location.

16.   (original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising:

receiving email with a mail server; and

transferring email containing an access function to said redirector as proxy for said plurality of computing elements.

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17.   (original)   The method of claim 16, further comprising protecting said mail server and redirector with a firewall through which said email messages are received.

18.   (original)   The method of claim 17, further comprising accessing said services with a web client within said firewall that communicates with said redirector.

19.   (original)   The method of claim 18, further comprising generating web pages for said web client with said redirector, said web pages being related to said services.

20.   (original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising generating web pages for a web client with said redirector, said web pages being related to said services.

21.   (original)   The method of claim 11, further comprising sending a response email message following compliance with said extracted access function.

22.   (previously presented) The network of claim 1, wherein said redirector is configured to extract a service from an incoming email and launch said extracted service on one of said computing elements.

23.   (previously presented) The network of claim 22, wherein said redirector determines on which computer element to launch said service.

24.   (previously presented) The network of claim 1, wherein at least one of said computing elements comprises a service handler.

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25.   (previously presented) The network of claim 24, wherein said service handler downloads a service from an address taken from an incoming email message.

26.   (previously presented) A computer network for providing electronic services comprising:

a plurality of computing elements each of which comprises general-purpose, programmable computing resources that can be selectively programmed for supporting one or more of a plurality of different electronic services, wherein said services can be controlled or executed by commands or data transmitted via email;

a mail server for receiving and routing email; and

a redirector, separate from said mail server and said plurality of computing elements, communicatively connected to said mail server and each of said computing elements, wherein said redirector receives email from said mail server, wherein each email contains a command or data for a specific said service, with or without being addressed to a specific computing element, and wherein said redirector is configured to selectively match an available computing element with a specific service request of an incoming email and forward at least a portion of the email to that computing element so as to deliver said command or data to that specific service, such that said redirector serves as an email proxy for said plurality of computing elements; and

a service handler on at least one of said computing elements for automatically obtaining an electronic service using an incoming email and installing that service on the computing element corresponding to the service handler.

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27.   (previously presented)   The network of claim 26, wherein said service handler is configured to extract said service from said incoming email.

28.   (previously presented) The network of claim 26, wherein said service handler is configured to obtain said service from a location specified in said incoming email and then install that service.

29.   (previously presented) The network of claim 26, wherein said services are controlled by email messages routed by said redirector among said plurality of computing elements.

30.   (cancelled)

31.   (previously presented) The network of claim 26, further comprising a separate service handler on each of said plurality of computing elements.

32.   (previously presented) The network of claim 6, wherein said specified location comprises a Universal Resource Locator (URL) address.

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